1:Arensberg & Kimball E-5 (1932-1934) 1940
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tiveness among the coöperating workers, and any deviation from the accepted technique destroys such unison. This, too, the son learns at his father's hands.

At home the son learns that building and repairing the houses, sheds, and other structures of the farm is men's work and that the duty of performing it devolves on the father. He watches his father buy and use all the feeding stuffs needed for farm animals and learns something of the nice adjustment which must be made between the expenditures of this kind and those demanded by the women of the household for food, clothing, and household needs. He finds himself included in the family deliberations which impress upon him the economic interdependence of the family and the division of labor between men and women.

The process is a gradual one. It is an integral part of daily experience protracted over many years. In his earliest childhood, of course, the mother looms larger in the child's consciousness than the father. The child's first duties, as soon as he can speak and walk, are to run on petty errands to neighbors and near-by "friends." Soon he is taking his father's meals to him in the fields or going on errands to the nearest shop. Until he is seven and has gone through First Communion, his place is in the house with the women, and his labor is of very little importance. After First Communion, at six or seven, he begins to be thrown more with his elder brothers, and comes to do small chores which bring him more and more into contact with his father and with the other men of the neighborhood. By the time he is ten or eleven he will be brought home from school, if needed, to take his part in the important agricultural work of the year, particularly at spring sowing and hay harvest. But not till he passes Confirmation and leaves school (generally at the same time) does he take on full men's work. Even then, as he becomes adult and takes on more and more of the heavy tasks of the farm work, he never escapes his father's

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them to think I wasn't with them", he put it. No wonder, then, that the political allegiances of whole countrysides are constant factors in Irish politics.

The community reaches agreement upon its internal affairs, too, through the old men's discussions. It is in just this type of activity that one can at last put one's finger upon that nebulous force among men: public opinion. That force is not implemented; it is merely the power of gossip and censure; only in critical days, as in the time of land agitation, can it rise to action, as a last resort, and win itself an international name: the boycott. But it is none the less powerful.

But, in rural Ireland, the group through which this power flows serves another function which cannot be disassociated from its role as the seat of public opinion. The members of the old men's *cuaird* are the living repositories of tradition. In communities, such as Luogh, where the Irish language lingers on, many of them are *seanachaidhthe* or story-tellers. Among them the ancient repertories of legend, saga and folk-tale still find an audience. That the exponents of fairy-lore have always been, and are still, old men and old women, is no social accident. For the pattern of local life retains its continuity and preserves what it can of its conformity with the past through them.

But what of the young men, those who have not attained full status? They do not attend at the old men's house; they take no part in the deliberations

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884 there. From their own point of vantage, they scorn
573 their elders, as much as their subordinate position allows. And they, too, walk out on *cuaird* upon the roads night after night and gather-in at this house and that.

In Rynamona, they were as ardent evening visitors as the older men. But their habit showed a great difference. There was no single central clique so closely knit as that of the old men's house. They had no larger justification, as the old men had, for their meetings. They went because, frankly, "you never feel the time passing when you're in with the boys". They formed pairs of lads, brothers, friends, and groups of three and four and five who habitually played cards or walked the roads together. A still greater difference marked these groups. One rarely heard them talk of the affairs of the community. There was no debate, no reaching of decisions, no appeal to tradition and precedent. They spoke most often of their own plans, and the trials of their own age and kind. The skills upon which the cliques prided themselves and from which they drew their nicknames were of other sorts. Not even farming occupied a large share of their conversation, keen as their rivalry often was when work was going on.

In Rynamona the most frequent centre for the gatherings of the young men was the house of Roche, 'the public prosecutor', whose eldest son, a keen farmer about thirty, was something of a leader

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among them. Most of the young men between twenty-five and thirty-five met there. Through the winter months they met nearly every night, and played the usual games of the countryside, 'nap' and 'forty-five', often far into the wee hours. Other groups through the community met like these men and followed like pursuits with an equal zest.

At times, a custom somewhat more organized, the 'gamble', unites them all. It often brings in other young men across the lines separating community from community. As often as once a week, a gamble is held in or near Rynamona. Each household in its turn throws open its doors to the card-players. Admission, usually a shilling, goes to defraying the expense of a supper and tea for all and goes toward the prize.

For the gamble is one of many sporting events. The prize may be a turkey, or two geese, even a young pig or calf. Elaborate conventions govern the play, and the winner may count himself a proud man. To be known in the countryside, far and wide, as a 'great gambler' is a coveted distinction proving shrewdness and skill. The country dance is another such event, and still enlivens the countryside in the winter months, bringing the younger members of the communities together and providing honour for the distinguished. For 'a great dancer' is as widely known. In summer, hurley, the national game, has the same effect; and nowadays, through the nation-wide organization of the Gaelic

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526 573 884 Athletic Association, the 'great hurler' may win his way to the admiration of all Ireland.

But at home, in the local community, the young 884 men remain what they are. Their distinction lifts 573 them not at all from their status. Their skills are nothing more than proficiencies. The pursuits of the subordinate generation are no more than 'good times' that 'pass the time'. For, through no plan or design, but merely through the force of the social organization of values and behaviours, the activities of the young men's cliques exert no larger role within the community.

For the young men's cliques do not primarily serve to knit the community as a whole the more firmly. The difference is structural. The activities of the young men unite them from farm to farm, from clique to clique, even from one community to the next. The integration of the young men is a looser and less inclusive integration than that the old men's clique performs, even though the numbers ephemerally joined in gamble, dance or hurley match are much greater.

888 573 For the old men's clique unites, in its controlling voice, both young and old. The old men's clique unites the old men in terms of their common individual positions as recipients of the respect of the community, and as heads, owners and commanders of their family corporations. It expresses for the community the same subordination of the young men that is their lot within their families.